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**Economic Development,  
Agriculture & Trade Committee**

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**HJM 4039**

**Brief Description:** Requesting Congress to delay the passport requirements of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.

**Sponsors:** Representative Kessler.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requests that President George W. Bush, the President of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, each member of the Washington Congressional delegation, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State, delay the passport requirements of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative be delayed until January 1, 2009.

**Hearing Date:** 1/31/06

**Staff:** Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

**Background:**

The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 requires that by January 1, 2008, travelers to and from the Caribbean, Bermuda, Panama, Mexico, and Canada have a passport or other secure, accepted document to enter or re-enter the United States. In order to facilitate the implementation of this requirement, the Administration is proposing to complete it in phases following a proposed timeline, which will be published in the Federal Register in the near future.

This is a change from prior travel requirements and will affect all United States citizens entering the United States from countries within the Western Hemisphere who do not currently possess valid passports. This new requirement will also affect certain foreign nationals who currently are not required to present a passport to travel to the United States. Most Canadian citizens, citizens of the British Overseas Territory of Bermuda, and to a lesser degree, Mexican citizens will be affected by the implementation of this requirement.

Beginning December 31, 2006, the passport requirement will apply to all air and sea travel to or from Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. Beginning December 31, 2007, the requirement extends to all land border crossing as well air and sea travel.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Legislature requests that President George W. Bush, the President of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, each member of the Washington Congressional delegation, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State, delay the passport requirements of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative be delayed until January 1, 2009.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.